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ABSTRACT

In response to recent increases in the enrollment of Hispanic students at Rancho Santiago College, a study was conducted to examine the grades and course completion rates of students with Hispanic surnames enrolled in English classes. Three English courses were studied: English 060, which provides a thorough review of English grammar and punctuation and emphasizes short papers; English 061, which provides instruction and practice in writing well-developed paragraphs in a variety of modes; and English 101, Freshman Composition. All students with Hispanic surnames were identified on the spring 1987 rosters for these courses, and their final grades were determined. Study findings included the following: (1) 40% of the 415 students on the rosters for English 060 had Hispanic surnames; of these 45% withdrew from class, 24% received credit for the class, and 31% received no credit; (2) 34% of the 476 students enrolled in English 061 were Hispanic; of these, 33% withdrew from class, 46% received credit, and 21% received no credit; (3) a section of English 061 with special support services for Hispanic students had a 100% completion rate, with 86% of the students receiving credit; (4) 23% of the 686 students enrolled in Freshman Composition were Hispanic; of these 34% withdrew; and (5) rates of persistence were comparable for Hispanic and non-Hispanic students in English 060 and 061, but success rates were lower for Hispanic students in all three courses. (AYC)

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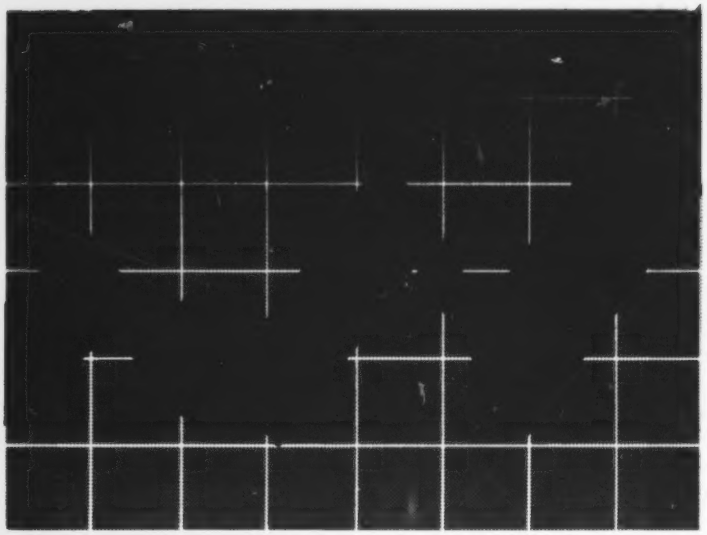

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SUCCESS OF HISPANIC STUDENTS IN ENGLISH CLASSES

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Fall, 1988

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rancho santiago community college district

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PROLOGUE

The following information attests to the need to assure the success of Hispanic students enrolled in RSC basic skills courses.

RSC Enrollment

- 24% increase in Hispanic students since Fall 1984
- 25% increase in Filipino students since Fall 1984
- 5% decline in Asian students since Fall 1984

- 18% of the credit enrollment is Hispanic
- 15% of the credit enrollment is Asian
- 8% of the credit enrollment is "other non-white"
- 61% of the credit enrollment is white

RSCCD ethnicity shifts (total population)

Year	White	Hispanic
1970	80%	16%
1980	60%	30%
2000	40%	45%

District Unified Demographics

- Hispanic enrollments:

Santa Ana	75%
Orange	17%
Garden Grove	28%

- High School drop-out rate:

48%
19%
35%

Santa Ana Unified School District

- 40% of the 35,000 students enrolled have been identified as not proficient in English.
- The city of Santa Ana is 84% minority, with a preponderance of the minority population being Hispanic.

With these trends apparent in the Rancho Santiago Community College District, Betty Dixon, RSC English instructor and Puente Project instructor, undertook the following study of Hispanic students enrolled in RSC English courses. The study is published under the RSC Institutional Research cover because of the technical assistance provided for the study by the Research Office and because of the importance of the study topic and, consequently, wide dissemination of the results.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study was simple: to determine the success and completion rates of students with Hispanic surnames in English 060, 061, and 101.

To determine this, permanent rosters of these English classes were studied in the Spring Semester, 1987. Permanent rosters include those students who are present in the class after the normal add/drop period at the start of the semester and who are enrolled at fourth census week. This survey does not include student "drop" activity before that time.

Students with Hispanic surnames were identified by the researcher and Isaac Guzman, an Hispanic counselor. Surnames were the only criterion used for identification of Hispanic students. Therefore, it is possible that some mis-identification has been made. For example, some of the identified students may not be of Hispanic origin, but married to Hispanics, and vice versa. Furthermore, there was no attempt to ascertain how long students had lived in the United States or to survey their first languages.

Final grades including withdrawals were then posted to the identified names.

Students in the surveyed classes are assumed to have taken placement tests required by the college and by the English department and to have been properly placed in their respective classes by both the test score and a first-week writing sample administered in the English class in which they enrolled. Students who are functioning in a language other than English at pre-college levels are not a part of this survey. These students should, hopefully, have been tested and enrolled in English as a Second Language (ESL) classes.

Course Description

English 060 is a three unit course, two levels below English 101, Freshman Composition. Although English 060 no longer bears credit toward the AA degree, at the time of the study it was still a college credit class. The purpose of the course is to provide a thorough review of English grammar and punctuation and to develop increasing fluency in writing short papers. Classes in Spring, 1987, were delivered both in classroom lecture settings and in the Composition Center where the audio-tutorial method was employed using a slide-tape presentation with instructors monitoring and individual conferencing. The course is taught both day and night by both full and part-time instructors.

There were 20 sections of English 060 active after the normal add/drop period (fourth week); however, Section 20 has been omitted from the study as it contained only two students, neither of which was Hispanic. English 060 is offered only on a Credit/No Credit basis; that is, no letter grades are given. Students must pass an exit exam to receive a grade of Credit and to advance to the next class.

Hispanic Distribution

A total of 415 students appeared on the permanent class roster. Of these, 166 (40%) were Hispanic.

Summary of Findings

Of the 166 Hispanic students enrolled, 75 students (45%) withdrew from the class before the final date drops are allowed (14th week of the semester); 91 (55%) received final grades: 40 (24%) completed the course with a grade of Credit. An additional 51 students (31%) received a grade of No Credit. A grade of No Credit may have been the result of failure to drop the class before the final drop date, failure to take and/or pass the final exam, or failure to complete course work prerequisite prior to taking the final exam.

Hispanic enrollment		Credit	No Credit	Total receiving grades	Drops before 14th week
166	n	40	51	91	75
	%	24%	31%	55%	45%

Although a summary is informing, a look at Hispanic enrollments and success rates section by section is even more illuminating. Successful completion rates ranged from zero percent to 50%.

English 060 Hispanic Enrollment

Section	Number on permanent roster	Number who completed course	Number who received credit	Percentage completing with credit
1	18	11	8	44%
2	10	5	2	20
3	7	7	2	29
4	14	8	3	21
5	10	3	1	10
6	2	2	0	0
7	4	1	0	0
8	13	9	3	23
9	9	4	3	33
10	8	8	1	13
11	8	8	0	0
12	7	5	3	43
13	3	2	1	33
14	8	3	1	13
15	16	9	4	25
16	3	1	0	0
17	12	6	3	25
18	10	8	5	50
19	4	3	0	0
20	0	0	0	0
Total	166	91	40	24%

Course Description

English 061 is a three-unit course, one level below English 101, Freshman Composition. This course is required for the AA degree. The purpose of the course is primarily to provide instruction and practice in writing well-developed paragraphs in a variety of modes. Sentence refinement and review of grammar and punctuation is provided as needed. At the time of the survey, the class was taught in both the Composition Center, utilizing an individualized conference method, and in regular lecture classes. It is now taught in lecture delivery mode only. The course is taught both day and night by both full-time and part-time instructors. There were 22 sections of English 061 during the surveyed term. Like English 060, English 061 is only offered on a Credit/No Credit basis, and, therefore, no letter grades are given. The student must pass an exit exam to advance to English 101.

Hispanic Distribution

A total of 476 students were enrolled on the permanent class rosters. Of these, 163 (34%) were Hispanic.

Summary of Findings

Of the 163 Hispanic students enrolled, 75 (46%) completed the class with a grade of Credit, 34 (21%) received a grade of No Credit, and 54 (33%) withdrew before the final drop date. Thus, 109 students (67%) received grades.

Hispanic enrollment		Credit	No Credit	Total Receiving grades	Drops before 14th week
163	n	75	34	109	54
	%	46%	21%	67%	33%

Puente Project Findings

One of the 22 sections of English 061 was specifically designated for Rancho Santiago College's Puente Project. The Puente Project is a state-wide community college program utilizing specially trained English instructors, Hispanic counselors, and community mentors who are dedicated to both improving the English language skills of Hispanic students, helping them to develop long-range academic and career goals, and assisting and encouraging them to transfer to a four-year college or university.

Of 22 sections containing 163 Hispanic students, the Puente Project (Section 19) completed 36 students, 31 with a grade of Credit. Of the 75 Hispanic students who completed English 061 satisfactorily, 31 were in the Puente section, 41% of the total who received a grade of Credit. While 40 students got grades of No Credit overall, only 5 were in the Puente class.

Consequently, while the total Hispanic successful completion rate was 46%, only 35% of Hispanic non-Puente Program students completed English 061 successfully.

Section by section, Hispanic student success in English 061 is described below.

English 061 Hispanic Enrollment

Section	Number on permanent roster	Number who completed course	Number who received credit	Percentage completing with credit
1	8	5	0	0
2	5	3	3	60%
3	6	6	0	0
4	4	2	0	0
5	5	2	2	40
6	5	2	1	20
7	0	0	0	0
8	6	3	1	17
9	7	5	3	43
10	13	9	5	39
11	9	6	3	33
12	5	4	3	60
13	4	2	1	25
14	3	2	2	67
15	9	4	3	33
16	3	3	2	67
17	8	7	6	75
18	11	6	6	55
19 (Puente)	36	36	31	86
20	8	4	1	13
21	7	4	2	29
22	1	0	0	0
Total Non-Puente	127	79	44	35%
Total	163	115	75	46%

ENGLISH 101

Course Description

English 101, Freshman Composition, is a three-unit course required for transfer to four-year institutions. The purpose of the course is to provide instruction and practice which will enable students to write multi-paragraph papers varying in length from 500 to as many as 5,000 words or more, the longer papers usually being a research project. The course also contains substantial reading. The course is taught by both full and part-time faculty, days and evenings. To qualify for enrollment in English 101, students must complete the placement test with an appropriate score, complete English 061 successfully, or be recommended from English 060 by an English instructor. A first-week in-class writing sample also confirms correct placement. The course is offered on a letter-grade basis, but students may petition for a grade of Credit/No Credit.

Hispanic Distribution

Of the 686 students enrolled, 160 (23%) were Hispanic.

Summary of Findings

Of the 161 Hispanic students enrolled in English 101, 54 (34%) withdrew. There were 106 grades given. Of these, 81 (76%) received grades of A, B, C or Credit. There were 25 students (24%) who received grades of D or F. A summary of all English 101 grades for Hispanic enrollees awarded follows.

	All Hispanics	
Grade	Number	Percentage
A	14	13%
B	22	21%
C	43	41%
D	9	8%
F	16	15%
Cr	2	2%
NCr	0	0%

Puente Project (English 101) Class findings

Of the 32 students enrolled in the Puente Project section of English 101, 9 (28%) withdrew. Of the 23 students who received grades for the course, 16 (70%) received grades of A, B, or C. Seven students (30%) received a grade of D or F. A summary of the grade distribution follows.

Puente Project

Grade	Number	Percentage
A	5	22%
B	6	26%
C	5	22%
D	2	9%
F	5	22%

Fifty-one percent of the total enrollment of Hispanic students were successful (81 of 160); 50% of the Puente Project class were successful. Of the 106 Hispanic students in all sections who received final grades, 23 (22%) were Puente students.

A section by section summary of the persistence and success of Hispanics for English 101 classes is provided on the following page.

Course Placement

The most popular method of entry into English 101 was from English 061. All 32 Puente students had taken English 061 in their year-long program. Fifty other students entered via the same class. Thirteen entered through English 110 (ESL) and three through another ESL course, English 109 (presumably with instructor recommendation). Fifty-one students entered directly into English 101 with no prerequisite class. Eleven entered from English 060 (again, presumably with instructor recommendation).

Sixteen students had unsuccessfully attempted English 101 before, one twice before and one three times. Although 57% of the enrollment of English 060 is Hispanic, only 11 who had previously had English 060 were enrolled in English 101.

Placement testing was also an interesting issue in that thirty-seven percent of all students had no placement test score even though this is a college requirement. Of these 59 untested students, 25 (42%) dropped the class. Seven others who remained in the course received a grade of D or F. Thus, 54% of the untested students were unsuccessful.

English 101 Hispanic Enrollment

Section	Number on permanent roster	Number who completed course	Number who received credit	Percentage completing with credit
1	2	2	2	100%
2	6	3	3	50
3	7	7	2	29
4	6	6	5	83
5	5	5	2	40
6	4	4	1	25
7	1	1	1	100
8	5	3	3	60
9	9	7	7	78
10	3	3	2	67
11	11	9	6	55
12	13	11	11	85
13	9	4	3	33
14 (Puente)	32	23	16	50
15	1	0	0	0
16	2	0	0	0
17	4	2	2	50
18	3	2	2	67
19	5	3	3	60
20	6	3	3	50
21	2	1	0	0
22	5	5	5	100
23	6	2	0	0
24	2	0	0	0
25	7	3	3	43
26	5	3	2	40
Total Non-Puente	128	83	65	51%
Total	161	106	81	51%

SUMMARY

It is important in reviewing the success and persistence of Hispanic students in these English courses to look also at both the success and persistence rates of all students and those of all non-Hispanic students.

SUMMARY TABLES

	English 060	English 061	English 101
Enrollment			
Total	100%	100%	100%
Hispanic	40%	34%	23%
Non-Hispanic	60%	66%	77%
Completion rates			
Total	56%	63%	71%
Hispanic	55%	67%	66%
Non-Hispanic	57%	61%	72%
Puente	---	100%	72%
Hispanic Non-Puente	---	61%	65%
Success rates			
Total	28%	42%	56%
Hispanic	24%	46%	51%
Non-Hispanic	31%	40%	58%
Puente	---	86%	50%
Hispanic Non-Puente	---	35%	51%

Successful students are defined as those earning a grade of Credit in English 060 and 061 and those earning a grade of A, B, C, or Credit in English 101.

Enrollment of Hispanics:

Although the numbers of Hispanic students remain nearly constant throughout the enrollments in these three English courses, the percentage of the total declines as courses become more advanced.

Persistence:

A total of 56% of all students completed English 060 in the

surveyed semester; 55% of the Hispanic students completed; 57% of non-Hispanics. Thus, Hispanic persistence in English 060 was similar to that of non-Hispanics.

In English 061, 63% of all students completed; 67% of Hispanic students; 61% of non-Hispanics. So, Hispanic persistence was better than both the persistence of non-Hispanics and that of the group as a whole. The 100% retention in the Puente Project was influential in this percentage, however.

In English 101, 71% of all enrolled completed; 66% of Hispanic students; 72% of non-Hispanics. Hispanic retention was somewhat less.

Hispanic persistence in remedial courses (060, 061) is as good as that of the student population as a whole and as that of the non-Hispanic population. In English 101, however, the completion rate of Hispanic non-Puente Project students is seven percentage points less than that for non-Hispanics.

Successful completion:

Successful completion of these courses shows that, in the surveyed semester, Hispanic non-Puente students are less successful than all others in English 060, 061 and 101. English 061 Puente students, however, are more successful than any other 061 group.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Persistence rates for Hispanics are similar to that of the entire enrollment in both remedial courses (English 060 and English 061), but decline in English 101.

- Despite completion of the classes, success of Hispanic students in English courses is less; only 24% receive credit in English 060. In English 061, 35% of Hispanic students succeed; in English 101, 51%.

- The Puente Project demonstrates high success rates in English 061. However, as students place themselves ("self-select") in the Puente Project and thus may represent a different type of student, it can not be concluded that their success results from their Puente Project experience. Had their enrollments been scattered through other English 061 classes, the results may have differed. This topic warrants further investigation.

- With the discontinuance of individualized instruction for English 060 through the Composition Center, a survey would be in order to see if the lecture method, now used exclusively in English 060 and 061, has made any difference in both persistence and success of all students.

- Tracking the persistence, achievement, and matriculation of Hispanic students into advanced English classes should be a subject of continuing interest to Rancho Santiago College as the demographics of our district shift markedly toward serving an increasingly Hispanic community.

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